

In the United States Court of Federal Claims

OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS

No. 20-1038V

(not to be published)

JENNIFER ARNOLD,

Petitioner,

v.

SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES,

Respondent.

Chief Special Master Corcoran

Filed: May 22, 2023

Special Processing Unit (SPU);
Attorney's Fees and Costs

Bridget Candace McCullough, Muller Brazil, LLP, Dresher, PA, for Petitioner.

*Mallori Browne Openchowski, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, for
Respondent.*

DECISION ON ATTORNEY'S FEES AND COSTS¹

On August 19, 2020, Jennifer Arnold filed a petition for compensation under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, 42 U.S.C. §300aa-10, *et seq.*² (the "Vaccine Act"). Petitioner alleges that she suffered a shoulder injury related to vaccine administration which meets the Table definition for a injury after receiving a tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis vaccine on May 2, 2019. Petition, ECF No. 1. On October 17, 2022, I issued a decision awarding compensation to Petitioner based on the parties' stipulation. ECF No. 39.

¹ In accordance with Vaccine Rule 18(b), Petitioner has 14 days to identify and move to redact medical or other information, the disclosure of which would constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy. If, upon review, I agree that the identified material fits within this definition, I will redact such material from public access.

² National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, Pub. L. No. 99-660, 100 Stat. 3755. Hereinafter, for ease of citation, all section references to the Vaccine Act will be to the pertinent subparagraph of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa (2018).

Petitioner has now filed a motion for attorney's fees and costs, requesting an award of \$12,607.74 (representing \$11,962.00 for fees and \$645.74 for costs). Petitioner's Application for Attorney's Fees and Costs ("Motion") filed Apr. 2, 2023, ECF No. 45. In accordance with General Order No. 9, Petitioner filed a signed statement indicating that she incurred no out-of-pocket expenses. ECF No. 44.

Respondent reacted to the motion on Apr. 13, 2023, indicating that he is satisfied that the statutory requirements for an award of attorney's fees and costs are met in this case, but deferring resolution of the amount to be awarded to my discretion. Respondent's Response to Motion at 2-3, 3 n.2, ECF No. 46. Petitioner did not file a reply thereafter.

The rates requested for work performed through the end of 2022 are reasonable, and consistent with our prior determinations, and will therefore be adopted. Petitioner has also requested the rate of \$350 for work performed by Bridget McCullough in 2023 - representing a rate increase of \$50. Attachment to Motion at 8. I find this hourly rate to be reasonable and will award the attorney's fees requested. (And all time billed to the matter was also reasonably incurred.)

Furthermore, Petitioner has provided supporting documentation for all claimed costs and Respondent offered no specific objection to the rates or amounts sought. I have reviewed the requested costs and find them to be reasonable.

The Vaccine Act permits an award of reasonable attorney's fees and costs for successful claimants. Section 15(e). Accordingly, I hereby GRANT Petitioner's Motion for attorney's fees and costs. I award a total of **\$12,607.74 (representing \$11,962.00 for fees and \$645.74 in costs) as a lump sum in the form of a check jointly payable to Petitioner and Petitioner's counsel, Bridget C. McCullough.**

In the absence of a timely-filed motion for review (see Appendix B to the Rules of the Court), the Clerk of Court shall enter judgment in accordance with this decision.³

IT IS SO ORDERED.

s/Brian H. Corcoran
Brian H. Corcoran
Chief Special Master

³ Pursuant to Vaccine Rule 11(a), the parties may expedite entry of judgment by filing a joint notice renouncing their right to seek review.